

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 5-21 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 2 and 4 have been inserted into claim 1 and correspondingly cancelled. Support for new claims 10-17 is found at pages 8, 10 and 12 of the specification. Support for new claims 18-21 is found in original claims 1 and 6-9.

Allowable Claims

Claims 4-6, 8 and 9 were indicated as being allowable and were merely objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 4 has been incorporated into claim 1, such that all of claims 1, 3 and 5-17 have also been placed into allowable form. Allowable claim 9 has also been combined with original claim 1 in new claim 18, such that new claims 18-21 have also been placed into allowable form. Consequently, all of the pending claims of the present application are in allowable form, such that a Notice of Allowance should now be granted.

Removal of Issues Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 1, 3 and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Oka '377 (USP 5,143,377).

Claims 1, 2 and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kalabria '646 (USP 6,719,646) in view of Oka '377.

Both of the bases for the above-noted rejections have been removed upon the incorporation of claim 4 into claim 1 and the incorporation of claim 9 into claim 1 to form new claim 18. Therefore, it is requested that these rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion

It is submitted for the reasons stated above that the present claims define patentable subject matter such that this application should now be placed condition for allowance.

If any questions arise regarding the above matters, please contact Applicant's representative, Andrew D. Meikle (Reg. No. 32,868), in the Washington Metropolitan Area at the phone number listed below.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicants hereby petition for an extension of one (1) month to November 28, 2004, in which to file a reply to the Office Action. The required fee of \$110.00 is enclosed herewith.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees

Appl. No. 10/750,827

required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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